

Application No. 10/622,366

PATENT
Docket No.: 10393-41858Amendments to the Specification

Please replace lines 3–13 of page 7 of the specification with the following amended paragraph.

A carrier to hold the premium may be included with the assembling of the vendable prize delivery mechanism. The carrier optionally can provide the vendable prize delivery mechanism with sufficient rigidity to withstand being placed in a column of primary product containers without degradation of the vendable prize delivery mechanism. Furthermore, the carrier can be weighted a carrier so that the vendable prize delivery mechanism more closely approximate approximates the primary product container filled with a beverage. The carrier can also include weighted interlocking components to hold the premium. One carrier embodiment has the weighted interlocking components comprise comprising a carrier plug shaped to conform to an inner bottom surface of the primary product container.

Please replace lines 19–22 of page 8 of the specification with the following amended paragraph.

Turning now to figures, in which like numerals indicate like elements throughout the several figures, Fig. 1 illustrates several embodiments of articles of manufacture that are sizes sized and shaped like those of a beverage container that can be vended in a vending machine.

Please replace lines 23–25 of page 8 and lines 1–5 of page 9 of the specification with the following amended paragraph.

Illustrated, in a top and side view, is a beverage container 102 in the form of a can that is sized and shape similar to those typically dispensed in a vending machine. The can 102 has a top section 108 that can be screwed into a bottom section 110 during an assembly process. The can 102 is the delivery mechanism for a prize or premium 114. Optionally, the premium 114 can be placed in a carrier 112 in order to stabilize the

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premium inside the can 102 during shipping and handling and to provide additional weight, if required, to enable the can 102 to easily dispense from a vending machine.

Please replace lines 6-14 of page 9 of the specification with the following amended paragraph.

The top section 108 of the can container 102 includes a slot 112 into which a number of coins or other currency 128 can be inserted. The number and the denomination of the currency 128 can be determined near the time as at which the prize-filled container is placed into the vending machine. Provision of the currency 128 within the container 102, together with the premium 114, allows the consumer to obtain a beverage from the vending machine in accordance with their original desire, after receiving the prize or promotion 114 from their original funds inserted into the vending machine.

Please replace lines 9-22 of page 10 of the specification with the following amended paragraph.

Turning now to Fig. 2, illustrated is the top and side view of the beverage can 102 of Fig. 1. The can 102 includes a top section 108 and a bottom section 110 preferably made out of a transparent material. The bottom of the top section 108 includes a threaded section 130 that can be screwed into a bottom screw receptacle section 132 of the bottom can section 110 during an assembly process. The top section 108 of the can container 102 includes a slot 120 into which a number of coins or other currency can be inserted. The number and the denomination of the currency can be determined near the time as at which the prize-filled container is placed into the local market vending machine. Thus, improved design enables local market adaptability of promotional programs that has otherwise been restricted because it has been difficult to change the amount or type of currency needed to purchase the primary product in the local market where the promotion is to be done.

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Please replace lines 19–25 of page 12 and lines 1–2 of page 13 of the specification with the following amended paragraph.

Also, the bottle container 104 of Fig.1 is illustrated. As shown, the premium 114 is inserted into a carrier 112. The carrier 112 stabilizes the premium 114 during transportation and handling. The carrier also adds additional weight so that the assembled container 104 approaches the weight of a can container filled with a beverage. After insertion of the carrier 112 with the premium 114 inside, the bottom section 116 118 can be screwed onto the top section 118 116. The bottle container 104 is now ready to be shipped to various localities for the addition of local currency before being placed inside a vending machine.

Please replace lines 3–16 of page 14 of the specification with the following amended paragraph.

Fig. 9 illustrates the steps for the process for vending promotional articles with reduced labor costs and adapted for local currency. In step 1, the vendable articles are molded. The articles consist of a top section and a removable bottom section. Step 2 follows step 1, in which the promotional items are inserted. This step can be performed at the location of step 1 or at another location where labor costs are cheap. Step 3 follows step 2, in which the articles are sealed, typically by shrink-wrap. Step 4 follows step 3, in which the articles are shipped to multiple locations near where the articles are to be vended. Step 5 follows step 4, in which the articles are received at the locale in which the promotion is being done. Step 6 follows step 6 5, in which the currency is added that is appropriate for the particular locale. The slot is preferably sealed by tape or by shrink-wrap of the article. Step 7 concludes the process whereby the articles are loaded in vending machines for sale to consumers.